

UNIVERSALITY 6
OF THE
LOVE of GOD
ASSERTED;
In a TESTIMONY to his
FREE GRACE
IN
JESUS CHRIST.

By WILLIAM RAWLINSON.

Therefore, as by the Offence of One, JUDGMENT came upon ALL MEN to CONDEMNATION; even so, by the Righteousness of One, the FREE GIFT came upon ALL MEN unto JUSTIFICATION of LIFE, Rom. v. 18.

— *That they may adorn the Doctrine of God our Saviour in all Things: For the GRACE of GOD, that BRINGETH SALVATION, hath appeared to ALL MEN; teaching us, that denying Ungodliness and worldly Lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present World, Titus ii. 10, 11, 12.*

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THE
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William Rawlinson,

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FRIENDLY READERS,

LOVE to the blessed Gospel of our LORD and SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST, who was crucified without the Gates of Jerusalem, joined with real Desires for the Welfare of all those who believe the Doctrines opposed in the following Treatise, more particularly you who are my Neighbours and Acquaintance, hath been the only Motive that hath drawn these following Lines from me, and that hath made me willing to present this small Treatise to your Consideration, believing the same to be my Duty.

Now, as Life Eternal is placed in the true Knowledge of GOD, and JESUS CHRIST whom he hath sent; (which Knowledge is more than a bare Assent and Belief of the Truth; even a Heart Knowledge, proceeding from the New Birth, and CHRIST being formed in the Soul :) To have right Thoughts and Apprehensions of GOD, is a great Step towards the attaining of this more excellent Knowledge; for such

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Persons are far more likely to persevere in their Journey towards Heaven, tho' they may be sorely assaulted with Temptations, and sometimes overcome by the Enemy of their Souls ; and there is more Hopes of their Recovery, by much, than of those that are, as it were, principled with false Notions of GOD.

Wherefore it is not safe to believe, that CHRIST has so made Satisfaction to the Justice of GOD for Sin, (by that One Offering, whereby he has for ever perfected all the sanctified) as that there is nothing now to be done by us, thro' his Help, to intitle us to the saving Benefit of that One Offering, made by him once for all : For if we do, the Loss will be irreparable ; for then we destroy Faith, Repentance, Mortification, Sanctification, and the Work of Regeneration and the New Birth ; without which, our Saviour hath affirmed, We cannot see the Kingdom of GOD.

Nor is it safe to believe, that the infinitely good GOD did, before all Time, ordain any Part of Mankind to Dishonour and Wrath, without any Respect had to their Disobedience and Sin ; or that CHRIST died only for a certain Number of Mankind, called the Elect ; and that the rest of Mankind hath no Interest or saving Benefit intended

them

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them by his Death; or that Grace is only given to those that shall be saved; or that none can fall away from Grace.

Now, to make the contrary appear to be the Truth, is the Design of this small Treatise: Therefore I have adapted the First Head, to shew GOD's universal Love to Mankind in general. The Second, to shew that CHRIST died for all Men, without Exception. The Third, to shew that CHRIST hath procured, as the Fruit and Effect of his Death, a Measure of saving Light and Grace for all Men; whereby all are put into a Capacity to lay hold on the Redemption that is in him: For if there were not a Measure of divine Light and Grace given to all Men, enabling them, in the Day of Visitation, to convert or turn to GOD, and lay hold on CHRIST and his Righteousness, I see not how they should have any Benefit by CHRIST; seeing Man, in his natural State, is unable of himself to make the least Step towards his own Restoration. And it is also absurd to think, that CHRIST should offer up himself for the Sins of Mankind, and yet not give them the Means, whereby they may lay hold of, or embrace the Benefit. The Fourth Head shews, that those, to whom Grace is given, may, notwithstanding, perish, if they

be not duly watchful, and improve the same. All this I have done in as brief a Manner as I possibly could.

Friendly Readers, One Thing more I owe you, that is, to give you a small Account what we, as a People, believe concerning some of the weighty Principles of Christianity; because I know we are, as the Christians were in the Primitive Times, a People almost every where spoken against; and it often happens, that the Prejudiced are more apt to take an Account from our Adversaries of our Belief, than from ourselves; tho' every impartial Man must conclude, that we certainly know what we do believe better than any else: For how should any know what we believe but from us?

First, We believe in one GOD, and in one LORD JESUS CHRIST, and in one HOLY SPIRIT; and that these Three are One, of infinite Perfection, Wisdom, Goodness, Justice, and Holiness; knowing all Things past, present, and to come; present in all Places, and able to do all Things.

Secondly, That JESUS CHRIST, the Son of GOD, in the Fulness of Time, took on him the Seed of Abraham, and was conceived of the Holy Ghost, and born of the Virgin Mary, at Bethlehem in Judea; being perfect Man as well as perfect

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GOD ; and was made in all Things like unto us, Sin only excepted ; and that he was crucified for our Sins, and not for ours only, but also for the Sins of the whole World, and rose again on the third Day, and after forty Days ascended into Heaven, now appearing in the Presence of GOD for us, our Mediator and Advocate with the Father ; and that as he was true and real Man, so he continues to be glorified in Soul and Body. Also, as we believe, that there is no Remission of Sin, but by virtue of his most precious Death and Sufferings, performed for us, without us, thro' our unfeigned Repentance, and receiving him into our Hearts, by his blessed Light, Grace, and Holy Spirit ; so we believe the same to have Influence on the whole Work of our Salvation, even Sanctification, as well as Justification : For tho' it is the Holy Spirit that doth inwardly renew and sanctify us ; yet that blessed Privilege is owing to the offering up of himself, and shedding of his most precious Blood without us, as the procuring Cause thereof. Also we believe, he will return to judge the World in the Day of Judgment, according to these Scriptures : And he hath commanded us to preach unto the People, and to testify, that it is he which was ordained of GOD to be the Judge of Quick and

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and Dead. Because he hath appointed a Day, in the which he will judge the World in Righteousness, by that Man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given Assurance unto all Men, in that he hath raised him from the Dead, *Acts* x. 42. xvii. 31. *And from thus believing in CHRIST, it followeth, that we should believe in the Resurrection of the Dead, or of the Body, which we sincerely do; tho' some have been so ignorant, or wicked, as to say we do not.*

Thus I have given you a short, but true Account what we believe concerning our LORD and SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST, and the great Benefits that cometh to us thro' him: But if you are desirous to be further informed, concerning our Faith and Doctrine, I recommend to your Perusal that excellent Book, published by Robert Barclay, intituled, AN APOLOGY for the true Christian Divinity, as the same is held forth and preached by the People called, in Scorn, Quakers; printed 1675.

To conclude, I desire you, whoever you are, that may read me, that as you would profit in Godliness; to apply your Minds to that divine Principle of Grace and Light, spoken to under the third Head of this Treatise; for thereby you may come savingly to know
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God and yourselves aright, and to understand the Scriptures: And except thereby you come to be taught, instructed, or illuminated, you can never rightly either know God, or yourselves, nor truly understand the Scriptures. Wherefore it highly concerns you, to have a tender Regard to the Operation of this divine Principle in your own Consciences, which discovereth Sin, and the Evil of it; and also inclines your Minds to Godliness and a Love of Virtue. That there is such a Principle often so working in your Hearts, I do not at all question but you will readily acknowledge, if you are not those whose Day of Visitation is expired: But if you are not yet so acquainted with God, or his Discoveries to your Souls, by his Light, Grace, or Holy Spirit, as to know his Voice from that of the Strangers, and so question whether that which doth thus reprove you for Evil, and incline you to Good, be the Grace of God, or only the Checks of a natural Conscience, let me inform you what Christ hath said, that the Comforter, John xvi. 7, 8. the Spirit of Truth, when it comes, should reprove the World of Sin, of Righteousness, and of Judgment. And the Apostle John, speaking also of the Spirit, under the Name of the Anointing, saith, But the Anointing, 1 John ii. 27. which ye have

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have received of him, abideth in you; and you need not that any Man teach you, but as the same Anointing teacheth you of all Things, and is Truth, and is no Lye. *And that this gracious Visitation of the Love of God is universal, in the Day of Visitation to all Men, is also clear from the Doctrine of the same Apostle; for, saith he, The true Light, John i. 9. lighteth every Man that cometh into the World. To which the Apostle Paul joins his Testimony, affirming, That the Grace of GOD, that brings Salvation, hath appeared to all Men, Titus ii. 11. and taught them that believed, not only to deny Ungodliness and worldly Lusts, but also to live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present World. Wherefore, I hope, it is apparent, that this is the Work and Office of the Spirit.*

So, with sincere Desires, friendly Readers, for your eternal Salvation, I shall conclude, remaining, in all Christian Duty,

Your Christian Friend,

WILLIAM RAWLINSON.

C H A P.

C H A P. I.

Of the UNIVERSAL LOVE of GOD to MANKIND.

SAY unto them, *As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no Pleasure in the Death of the Wicked, but that the Wicked turn from his Way and live. Turn ye, turn ye from your evil Ways,----- for why will ye die, O House of Israel?* (a) Ezek. xxxiii. 11. *For this is good and acceptable in the Sight of God our Saviour, who will have all Men to be saved, and to come to the Knowledge of the Truth,* (b) 1 Tim. ii. 3, 4. *The Lord is not slack concerning his Promise, (as some Men count Slackness) but is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to Repentance,* (c) 2 Pet. iii. 9. *What mean ye, that ye use this Proverb concerning the Land of Israel, saying, The Fathers have eaten sour Grapes, and the Childrens' Teeth are set on Edge? As I live, saith the Lord God, ye shall not have occasion any more to use this Proverb in Israel. Behold, all Souls are mine; as the Soul of the Father, so also the Soul of the Son is mine: The Soul that sinneth, it shall die.*
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The Son shall not bear the Iniquity of the Father, neither shall the Father bear the Iniquity of the Son; the Righteousness of the Righteous shall be upon him, and the Wickedness of the Wicked shall be upon him: But if the Wicked will turn from all his Sins that he hath committed, and keep all my Statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die, (d) Ezek. xviii. 2, 3, 4, 20, 21. Then Peter opened his Mouth, and said, Of a Truth I perceive that God is no Respector of Persons: but in every Nation, he that feareth God and worketh Righteousness, is accepted with him, (e) Acts x. 34, 35. For God so loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting Life. For God sent not his Son into the World, to condemn the World; but that the World through him might be saved.----And this is the Condemnation, (of the World) that Light is come into the World, and Men loved Darkness rather than Light, because their Deeds were evil, (f) John iii. 16, 17, 19. And the Times of this Ignorance God winked at: but now commandeth all Men every where to repent, (g) Acts xvii. 30.

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R E M A R K S.

(a) Here the Prophet *Ezekiel*, in the Name of the LORD, informs us, that *God hath no Pleasure in the Death of the Wicked*; but, on the contrary, that, *if the Wicked will turn from their evil Ways, they may live*. This Testimony, if we had no more, is sufficient to prove, that God hath not, from all Eternity, fore-ordained any Part of Mankind to Dishonour and Wrath, or to everlasting Death, without any Respect had to their Disobedience or Sin, for the Glory of his sovereign Power, as the *Westminster Confession of Faith* teacheth; which I shall consider at the Close of this small Treatise, with the Scripture Texts they bring for Proof, that if, by any Means, I may be helpful to remove so dangerous an Opinion concerning the sovereign Power of God, out of the Minds of some, *well-inclin'd* Neighbours, and others, to whose Hands these may come; seeing this Doctrine is much embraced, both by *Presbyterians, Independents*, and some *Baptists*; which much hindereth them from receiving the Truth: For, if God had so fore-ordained, how could he say, *he had no Pleasure in their Death, or Destruction?* For we must conclude he doth take Pleasure in his own Acts; and such is this

acknowledged to be. And moreover, how could the holy true GOD call unto them (the Wicked) to turn from their *evil Ways*, and that in such a Manner as bespeaks Compassion, as, *Turn ye, turn ye from your evil Ways, and live*, if he had fore-ordained, yea, from all Eternity, decreed their Destruction?

(b) Neither is the Apostle Paul less remarkable; who, to his beloved *Timothy*, gives this plain Account of the great Love of GOD to all, *That it is good and acceptable in the Sight of God our Saviour, who will have all Men to be saved, and to come to the Knowledge of the Truth*. If we may believe the Apostle to be as sincere as he is plain, we must, to the Glory of GOD, confess, this Doctrine of eternal absolute Reprobation, is contrary both to the Doctrine of the *Prophets* and *Apostles*. First, What is this *that is good and acceptable in the Sight of God*? It is, that Prayers and Supplications be made, not only for Kings, and all in Authority, but for *all Men*. And surely, since *it is good and acceptable* we should pray for all Men, God desires the Salvation of all, and the Destruction of none; and, therefore, it is truly said, *Man's Destruction is of himself, but his Help is in the Lord*. Whereas, if this Doctrine of

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absolute Reprobation is true, I see not how *Man's Destruction* is, properly and originally, *of himself*; because, according thereto, God had, from all Eternity, fore-ordain'd it; and nothing future was the Cause thereof: but, on the contrary, we see the *Apostle* exhorts, that *Supplications, Prayers, Intercessions, and giving of Thanks, be made for all Men*: And why? Because *it is good and acceptable in the Sight of God our Saviour*. And why is it *acceptable* in the Sight of God our Saviour? Because *he would have all Men to be saved*. And what Reason gives the *Apostle* for that? Because *Jesus Christ his Son, and our Saviour, gave himself a Ransom for all*. Thus we see how that, even in a Current, God's universal Love flows and runs towards Mankind, without Exception.

(c) Nor is the *Apostle Peter* less full and clear in this Matter, that whatsoever some Men count of the Long-suffering of God, yet he attributes it to his Goodness and Mercy, *That not any should perish, but that all should come to Repentance*; which, what more and full can be expressed, I know not: For if *he is not willing that any should perish*; then certainly he has not fore-ordained any thereunto.

And that he has not fore-ordained any to perish, is most clear, in that *he would have all come to Repentance*; for to whom Repentance is possible, Salvation is likewise; and that he calleth any to Repentance, without placing them in the Capacity to repent, or giving them Power, is more absurd.

(d) This Article brings us again to the Prophet *Ezekiel*, where, in the Name of God, he expostulates thus: *What mean ye, that ye use this Proverb concerning the Land of Israel, saying, The Fathers have eaten four Grapes, and the Childrens Teeth are set on Edge?* This is that for which God complained, as a false Charge upon him; seeing it implieth somewhat of Injustice, as he in the latter Part of the Chapter observes, saying, *Ye say, The Way of the LORD is not equal*: But to clear himself of this, he saith, *Ye shall not have occasion any more to use this Proverb*; and then assigns a Reason, viz. *All Souls are mine, as the Soul of the Father, so the Soul of the Son is mine: The Soul that sinneth it shall die*. Here God gives a strong Reason, which is sufficient indeed, and shews his Impartiality, *That all Souls are his*: So that the Son shall not suffer for his Father's Sins, untill by his own Sin he comes

comes to draw them upon him ; it being only, *The Soul that sinneth shall die.* But to put it past all Dispute, in the 20th Verse he expressly saith, *The Son shall not bear the Iniquity of the Father.* Than which, what more can be said, to clear GOD from imputing the Sin of the Father upon the Son, without his own actual Transgressions ? And further, to shew us, that as the Sin of the Father should extend no farther than himself, neither should his Righteousness, *The Righteousness of the Righteous shall be upon him, and the Wickedness of the Wicked shall be upon him :* And then he shews the Mercifulness of GOD towards the Wicked ; that, notwithstanding their Wickedness, yet if they will but turn therefrom, *they shall not die, but surely live.* GOD having thus cleared himself, appealed to them, *Hear now, O House of Israel, is not my Way equal ? Are not your Ways unequal ?* And then shews the Impossibility of falling away ; which I may consider under that Head. But here we may note, that GOD, to shew the Equality of his Ways, appealeth to them for Witnesses, and doth not plead his absolute Sovereign Power, and the Unsearchableness of his Wisdom : For tho' the unsearchable Wisdom of GOD is too

great for us to fathom ; yet, according to the Principles of Justice and Goodness, which he has given us, we know what is just and good, and what is contrary ; and therefore he appealeth even to them as Judges. Thus we see how opposite this absolute Reprobation is, both to the Doctrine of the Holy Scripture, and the Reason God has given us as Men. Only note this by the Way, under this Head, that tho' God doth thus graciously extend his Mercy towards the Wicked, yea, all Men, if we may believe *Ezekiel*, *Paul*, and *Peter* ; yet is not hereby understood all the Lifetime, but only during the Day of his Visitation to them : So that it is possible for many to out-live the Long-suffering of God, that leadeth to Repentance ; and then such may indeed (as indeed they are) be called *Reprobates*, who are ordained to Dishonour and Wrath ; but not without respect had to their Disobedience or Sin.

(e) From the Passage of *Cornelius*, we may in part gather, that *Peter* had, even in some Degree, been under a Misapprehension, supposing that God's Love and Providence was not extended to Mankind in general, as he came by that Occasion to understand from the Vision he saw, with

with the Relation *Cornelius* gave him, and God's pouring out the Holy Ghost, fully resolves him herein; so that he thus breaketh out into Acknowledgment of this Truth, saying, *Of a Truth I perceive God is no Respector of Persons: But in every Nation, he that feareth him, and worketh Righteousness, is accepted of him.* Which Passage I recommend to my Reader's serious Consideration.

(f) Now I come to that beloved Disciple, that had the Privilege to lean upon the Breast of his LORD; who, by the Holy Ghost, gives us this full Account of God's Love to the World, viz. *For God so loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting Life.* This is a general Offer of CHRIST to the World. Here is no Limitation; for the Word *whosoever*, is an indefinite Term, from which no Body is excepted: As, for Example, if in any Place any should make Proclamation of any Gift or Privilege, that *whosoever will, may have*, Are not all then at Liberty to accept thereof? Even so is God's Love through CHRIST, according to this beloved Disciple, *That whosoever believes in him, should not perish*; so that God ex-
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cepts none, but those who exclude themselves thro' their Unbelief, and rejecting the Grace offered. And thus GOD sent *not his Son into the World, to condemn the World; but that the World through him might be saved.* Now if we take the Word *World*, according to its common and genuine Sense, I hope all Mankind is under this Privilege. And for my Part, I do not remember in any Part of the *Bible*, that the *Believers* are called the *World*, distinct from the rest of Mankind. Yet the Apostle leaves it not here; but gives us to understand what CHRIST said was the *Condemnation of the World, that Light is come into the World, and Men love Darknes rather than Light.* Now, except the Apostle is speaking of two distinct Worlds, which yet he no way distinguishes, we may safely conclude, that Mankind in general is here intended: For he tells us, the *Condemnation* was, *because they loved Darknes rather than Light*; by which we cannot suppose he intended only *Believers*; for this is not applicable to *Believers*. To conclude this Particular, here we see, that CHRIST was *not sent to condemn the World, but to save it*; but its *Condemnation* is, because it *loves Darknes rather than Light*; and the

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Reason of that is, *because their Deeds are evil.* So that, is it not safer to believe the Account the Apostle gives us of the *Condemnation of the World*, than the Account the *Westminster Confession* gives us? The one saith, *Because Light is come into the World, and Men love Darknes rather than Light*; the other saith, *For the Glory of his Sovereign Power over his Creatures, he hath fore-ordained and decreed it, and that from all Eternity.*

(g) If GOD had so ordained and decreed it, How could the Apostle Paul truly say, *That GOD commands all Men every where to repent*? I do therefore query, Doth not *all Men, every where*, include all Particulars? And if it doth, as it needs must, then all Mankind must needs be under the Possibility of Salvation: For to whom Repentance is possible, Salvation is also possible; for those that repent, shall be saved, if they fall not away again. And if God commands all Men to *repent*, it must needs be, that they have Power given them of him to repent; for it were repugnant to Reason, much more to the holy, just, and good God, to require that of any of his Creatures, which he gives them no Power to do.

do. If it be replied, GOD gave *Adam* Power, and he lost it; so he may require Obedience, and yet give no Power. I answer, I deny it: For if *Adam* lost his Power thro' his Sin, and that his *Posterity* is included in the same Condition, let them that so affirm prove, that GOD requireth any Worship or Obedience of him or them, without giving them Power so to do: For, I suppose they will grant, those that are in this State deserve eternal Punishment for their Sin already committed; so that there is no need of more to damn them. But waving this, for Answer, I further say, this Sin of *Adam's*, according to the *Westminster Confession*, could be no Ground for GOD's Decree; for his Sin was but in Time, and this Decree was from Eternity: And also, GOD did not decree any thing, because he foresaw it as future; nay, *Adam's* Sin was necessary, he could not avoid it; because these *Faith-makers* say GOD did, from all Eternity, freely and unchangeably ordain whatsoever comes to pass: Yet they confess *Adam* had Power to fulfil the Law of GOD, being left to the Liberty of his own Will; which, if they can reconcile these two together, so as to make it intelligible

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telligible to the Understanding GOD has given to Mankind, I must confess I am to learn: But, for a more full Answer hereto, I refer to the next Head, that the Obedience of CHRIST is as extensive as the Sin of *Adam*.

C H A P.

C H A P. II.

Of the UNIVERSAL EXTENT OF CHRIST OUR SAVIOUR'S SA- CRIFICE and ATONEMENT.

AND the Scripture foreseeing that God would justify the Heathen thro' Faith, preached before the Gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all the Nations be blessed, Gal. iii. 8. Fear not : For behold, I bring you good Tidings of great Joy, which shall be to all People. For unto you is born this Day, in the City of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. Glory to God in the highest, and on Earth Peace, Good-will towards Men, Luke ii. 10, 11, 14. For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a Light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for Salvation unto the Ends of the Earth, Acts xiii. 47. Go ye therefore and teach all Nations, Matth. xxviii. 29. That Repentance and Remission of Sins should be preached in his Name, among all Nations, Luke xxiv. 47. For the Love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead : And that he died for

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all, that they which live, should not hence-
forth live unto themselves, but unto him
that died for them, and rose again, 2 Cor.
v. 14, 15. Therefore, as by the Offence of
one, Judgment came upon all Men to Con-
demnation; even so, by the Righteousness of
one, the free Gift came upon all unto Justifi-
cation of Life, Rom. v. 18. And through
thy Knowledge shall the weak Brother perish,
for whom Christ died? 1 Cor. viii. 11.
Who gave himself a Ransom for all, to be
testified in due Time, 1 Tim. ii. 6. But we
see Jesus, who was made a little lower than
the Angels, for the suffering of Death,
crowned with Glory and Honour; that he,
by the Grace of God, should taste Death for
every Man, Heb. ii. 9. And he is a Pro-
pitiation for our Sins; and not for ours
only, but also for the Sins of the whole
World, 1 John ii. 2. And we have seen
and do testify, that the Father sent the Son
to be the Saviour of the World, 1 John iv.
14.

R E M A R K S.

I desire all the Lovers of the Holy Scrip-
tures, and all those that are desirous to be
zealous for the Faith once delivered to the
Saints, seriously to weigh and consider,
how fully these inspired Writers declared
the Extent of CHRIST our Saviour's

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Atonement, and his being given for a general Redemption, without all Exception or Limitation to any Family, Nation, or People; but that he it was in whom *all Nations should be blessed*; which is *glad Tidings of great Joy to all People*; he being *the Light of the Gentiles, and God's Salvation unto the Ends of the Earth*; who is therefore to be *preached to all Nations, for Repentance and Remission of Sins*; and that *he died for all*; and by whose *Righteousness the free Gift is come upon all unto Justification of Life*: So that the Plaister is as broad as the Sore, and the Medicine as universal as the Disease. Therefore it highly concerns us, not to give Offence to any, seeing CHRIST died for them, giving himself a Ransom for all, and tasted Death for every Man; *being not only a Propitiation for our Sins, but also for the Sins of the whole World*; *being sent of the Father to be the Saviour of the World*. What more full, more extensive, and what more plain and clear, can be delivered or spoken? What Article of Faith, or Principle of Christianity, is in more exprefs Terms? So that it is even Matter of Astonishment, how any dare limit the blessed Benefits of the Atonement of our LORD JESUS CHRIST

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to any certain Number of Men, excluding the rest from any Interest or saving Benefit intended to them by GOD, and by our LORD JESUS CHRIST.

There may many undeniable Arguments be drawn from the foregoing Scriptures, and others that might be produced, in Confirmation and Proof of this Doctrine: But in regard these are so clear of themselves, I shall simply recommend them to the serious Perusal of my Readers; desiring they may seriously weigh the Force and Extent of them, and then I hope there will be no need of Illustrations. However, it may be Time enough to consider them further, when any takes it upon them to shew their Deficiency, in holding out this comfortable Doctrine.

And I hope I have delivered to my Reader this Article of Faith, (*of our Saviour's being not only a Propitiation for our Sins, [Believers] but also for the Sins of the whole World*) not feebly furnished, but richly stored with the Authority of CHRIST and his Apostles.

I know, that not only the *Westminster Confession*, but some other *Professors*, hold for Doctrine, that CHRIST did not die for all Men; but that all for whom he died shall be saved. Now the Falseness

of the former is sufficiently demonstrated in this Proposition ; the latter I will offer a Text or two in Refutation of ; tho' my intended Brevity will not admit me to be more particular ; neither is there that Occasion, as I apprehend : yet hereby it may appear the Holy Scriptures is against them in both. First, then, we have one Scripture already, 1 Cor. viii. 11. *And through thy Knowledge shall thy weak Brother perish, for whom Christ died ?* If the Apostle be not mistaken, nor I misapprehend him, then those for whom CHRIST died may perish. Again, the Apostle Peter saith, *But there were false Prophets also among the People, as there shall be false Teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable Heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift Destruction,* 2 Pet. ii. 1. What can be said more plain and full ? For the whole Matter is here express'd, both that these *false Teachers* were within the Purchase of Redemption, seeing they *denied the Lord that bought them*, and that, notwithstanding, they perish : For besides the Nature of their Crime, as being *false Teachers, and bringing in damnable Heresies, even to the denying the Lord that bought them,*

them, the Apostle saith, They brought upon themselves swift Destruction.

And thus the Falseness of their other Doctrine doth appear, which is so repugnant to the Love of GOD, and the Extent of CHRIST'S Atonement, as well as highly injurious to a great Part of Mankind; seeing that most Men may therefrom have Reason to question, Whether they are placed by GOD under any Possibility of finding Mercy? And, on the other hand, there may be those who may persuade themselves to be under this happy Condition, when they are not; so that, tho' they live in much Wickedness, they may flatter themselves they shall be saved. Thus this Doctrine gives too much Ground either to despair or presume; whereas, on the other hand, to believe as we do, and as the Holy Scriptures hold out, there is Ground of Encouragement for all, (yet none for any to presume) that notwithstanding the Depravedness of our Wills, and Corruption of our Natures, yet such is the infinite Love of GOD, as to give his Son, even our blessed LORD JESUS CHRIST of Nazareth, to be our Redeemer; who, in most perfect Obedience to his Father, offered up himself, even unto Death, yea the shameful

ful Death of the Crofs; and hath thereby both procured Remission of Sins, and obtained for all that free Gift of Grace, even a Manifestation of saving and evangelical Light and Grace; whereby, if they do not reject and resist it, but suffer it to have Influence upon them, they witness Faith to be begotten in their Hearts, and so come to Repentance; and then witness the Remission of their Sins, through the offering up of the Body of JESUS once for all, *Heb. x. 10.* But, on the contrary, if they reject the Offer of so great Love, they notwithstanding perish.

Thus I shall concludethis Particular, that it is possible for those to perish for whom CHRIST died, in the Words of the Author to the *Hebrews*: *Of how much sorer Punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under Foot the Son of God, and hath counted the Blood of the Covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy Thing, and done Despite unto the Spirit of Grace?* *Heb. x. 29.*

And that I may be the more intelligible, we may distinguish Redemption into Particular and General; even as there is a general giving, according to *Mat. xi. 27.* *John iii. 35.* *Psal. ii. 8.* and a particular giving, according to *John vi. 37.* and yet both

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both real and agreeable to Scripture ; as well as there is a general Call, according to *Mat.* ix. 13. *Mat.* xx. 16. and a particular Call, according to *Rom.* viii. 30. and yet both real, being relative to different States and Conditions. By the general Call, all Men, without Exception, are call'd to Repentance, and to turn from their evil Ways, and be received into the Favour of God ; which Call is real in God, tho' it is not always obeyed ; as we may see, *Rom.* x. 16. The special Call is to those, who, having obeyed the general, are called to a more glorious State, by the Spirit of Adoption, even to Sons and Daughters : and whom he thus calls he justifies, and, in Time, glorifies : Yet these two Calls differ not originally, being both the Drawings of God, by his Light and Grace, in the Hearts of Men ; but the one is to Man, while unconverted and unrenewed, and the other when converted and renewed : And till we come thus to apply Scripture, as it was spoken to divers States and Conditions, and Growths in Grace, we are never like either to reconcile the Scripture with itself, or ourselves to the one true Faith : For if we apply the *Qualifications* of grown Christians, and the Promises made to them, to Beginners ; and, on the other

other Hand, to allow to grown Christians only the Qualifications and Growths of Beginners, we shall make strange Work, and put the Holy Scriptures into great Disorder : So, in the Redemption purchased by our LORD, we are to distinguish between particular Redemption, which relates to actual Justification, and is only applicable to those that are in a sanctified State, 1 *John* i. 7. and that general Redemption, which relates to all; of which, that it may be understood what I mean thereby, take this following Account.

First then, the Wrath of God is so far removed; and his divine Justice so far satisfied, as that Repentance and Remission of Sins is offered, and a Measure of saving Light and Grace procured; whereby those great Mercies are not only simply offered, but Man is thereby put in a Capacity to receive them, and turn to the LORD; who is thus far, thro' his Son's Obedience, come nigh unto all: So that the LORD is, on his Part, reconciled to us, if we receive him, as hereby we are enabled to do. But, on the contrary, if God made only an Invitation to all to receive those good Things, and had not also given them Power, or placed them in a

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Condition to receive them ; nay, which is worse, to have ordained they shall not receive them, what are they the better for such an Offer? Or were it not as well they had no such Offer? Is it not, as if any were so foolish and idle, to set a Dish of good Meat before a Company of dead Men, and bid them eat and be refresh'd? And yet thus, or worse, would too many suppose of God, in giving his Son for the Life of the World, and the Preaching of the Gospel. But to return, he is, in the Sense above, a *Propitiation for the Sins of the whole World*: not that all are actually reconciled ; for so none are, but who are come to be in CHRIST : And thus the Apostle *Paul*. distinguisheth, saying, *Who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given us the Ministry of Reconciliation. Now then we are Ambassadors for Christ, as tho' God did beseech you by us ; we pray you, in Christ's Stead, be ye reconciled to God,* 2 Cor. v. 18, 20. Observe here, he saith, *Who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ*: That is, Believers, who were in CHRIST ; but of the rest, distinct from them, he neither saith they were thus reconciled, nor that they should be thus reconciled ; but saith, *Reconciling the World to himself, &c.* which plainly

plainly implieth, both that the Work was begun, and yet not finished : And thus they were *Ambassadors*, in CHRIST's Stead, to beseech or pray People *to be reconciled to God*: All which runs parallel, and shews God was willing, but Man was wanting on his Part.

Thus is GOD's Love to *lost Man* excellently set forth ; so that all are put by him under a real Capacity of Salvation, thro' our LORD JESUS CHRIST, and his meritorious Obedience ; and yet, if Man will not receive so rich Grace and Mercy, the Love of GOD is not in vain, nor our LORD CHRIST's Obedience unaccepted of his Father, as some do weakly imagine ; for GOD's Love is hereby heighten'd : so that he has done all that could be expected of a merciful and just Being. And CHRIST's Obedience is never the less accepted, in that in all Things he was found in perfect Obedience to his Father's Will ; which, to all that are saved, will be Matter of eternal Joy, as well as to all that perish, Matter of eternal Sorrow. Thus GOD will be glorified, both in them that are saved, and in them that perish ; the one acknowledging their Salvation to be of him ; the other, their Destruction to be of themselves.

C H A P.

C H A P. III.

Of the UNIVERSAL PRINCIPLE of SAVING LIGHT and GRACE.

IN the Beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.---In him was Life, and the Life was the Light of Men. And the Light shineth in Darkness, and the Darkness comprehendeth it not.---That was the true Light, which lighteth every Man that cometh into the World, John i. 1, 4. 5. 9. For the Grace of God, that bringeth Salvation, hath appeared unto all Men; teaching us, that denying Ungodliness and worldly Lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present World, Tit. ii. 11, 12. Therefore, as by the Offence of one, Judgment came upon all Men to Condemnation; even so, by the Righteousness of one, the free Gift came upon all Men to Justification of Life, Romans v. 18. But the Manifestation of the Spirit is given to every Man to profit with-
all, 1 Cor. xii. 7. The Righteousness which is of Faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine Heart, Who shall ascend into Heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above) Or who shall descend into the Deep? (that is,

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is, to bring Christ again from the Dead) But what saith it? The Word is nigh thee, even in thy Mouth, and in thy Heart, Romans x. 6, 7, 8. Deut. xxx. 12. that thou may hear it and obey it.

R E M A R K S.

If we would but seriously weigh the Force of these few Texts, without Regard to our particular Opinions, no doubt but we should soon come to acknowledge the Truth of them: And to them may be added many more that declare the same Doctrine; which, for Brevity's Sake, I have omitted. But such is some Men's Unhappiness, that they are rather willing to make the Holy Scriptures speak as they would, than to hear it speak in its own Language; and to give Meanings to it, than take it in its own Terms. Here the Apostle *John* giveth us three strong Reasons for believing that this Light, *which lighteth every Man*, is divine.

First, That this *Light* is the *Life* in him, the *Word*, *which was with God, and was God, and was made Flesh*; which was

CHRIST.

Secondly, That it *shineth in Darknes*; by which he distinguisheth it from the Light of Nature, or Man's natural Understanding;

derstanding; for the State of Man, in his natural Condition, is called *Darkness*, *Eph. v. 8.*

Thirdly, He further distinguisheth it from the Light of Nature, as well as confirms it to be divine, in affirming it to be that *true Light*; which the Light of Nature neither is, nor can be.

All which I may demonstrate further thus: That Light, which is the Life in him the divine Word, by whom all Things were made, is not natural, but supernatural Light; yet such is that Light, *which is the Light of Men*, or, *which lighteth every Man that cometh into the World*: Therefore that Light, *which lighteth every Man that cometh into the World*, is no natural, but a supernatural Light. Again, that Light, which is not comprehended by Darkness, (which Darkness is, as above, the State or Condition of Man naturally) must be a supernatural Light, consequently divine; and yet such is the Light which *lighteth every Man*, according to *John*; therefore this Light, *which lighteth every Man that cometh into the World*, is a divine Light. This is proved from *1 Corinthians ii. 11, 14.* *For what Man knoweth the Things of a Man, save the Spirit of a Man that is in him? Even so, the Things of God knoweth no Man, but the*

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Spirit of God. Thus it is evident, that as no lower Principle than the Spirit of a Man knoweth the Things of a Man; so not any lower Principle than the Spirit of God can give the true Knowledge of God. Wherefore the Spirit of God is absolutely necessary to come to the true Knowledge of God; and therefore Man, in his natural State, may properly enough both be called *Darkness*, and also truly enough be said *not to comprehend this Light*; because it is supernatural, and he is natural; for the less excellent cannot comprehend the more excellent: for nothing can reach above its proper Sphere. However, the Apostle, in the 14th Verse, puts a full Period to the Controversy, saying, *But the natural Man receiveth not the Things of the Spirit of God, for they are Foolishness unto him: Neither can he know them, [observe] because they are spiritually discerned, ver. 14.* Now, if it be objected, What better is Man for this supernatural Light, seeing his Condition is such that he cannot comprehend it? I answer, tho' he cannot, yet it can so break in upon him, as to reveal itself to him; and then, by the Discovery it makes, he may thereby receive so much Knowledge as is sufficient to his present State: And thus it doth reveal itself in
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the Day of every one's Visitation; for its
 lighting every one that comes into the
 World, is the Day of Visitation to every one;
 therefore every one has a Day of Visitation.
 And to this is applicable that of the Apostle
Paul, 2 Cor. iv. 6. *For God, who com-*
manded the Light to shine out of Darknes,
hath shined in our Hearts, to give the Light
of the Knowledge of the Glory of God, in
the Face of Jesus Christ. To which I
 may add that of the *Psalmist*, *For thou wilt*
light my Candle: The Lord my God will
enlighten my Darknes, Psal. xviii. 28.
Thirdly, The Light of Nature; which is
 that Principle of Reason, whereby Man
 becomes a rational Being, cannot properly
 be called a *true Light*; because, thro' the
 Fall, Man, in all his Faculties, is degene-
 rated and corrupted; so that our very
 Minds are become carnal; which, as the
 Apostle *Paul* hath defined, *is Enmity against*
God, Rom. viii. 7. And this also is further
 proved, from *Gen. vi. 5.* where we have
 a woful, but true Account of ourselves, as
 we stand in the Fall, *That every Imagina-*
tion of the Thoughts of our Hearts are only
evil continually. So that, as such, I can-
 not understand how we can have any *true*
Light: for the *Evangelist* doth not say,
 that this *true Light*, which he saith *light-*

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netb every Man that cometh into the World,
is any Principle we have as Men, thus
considered ; for he doth not make it to be
any Principle or Faculty of Man ; but, on
the contrary, that it is the *Life* in him the
Word: No more do we ; but account it
the Grace of God, and his rich Mercy
thro' our Redeemer, the LORD JESUS.

Thus, upon the whole, I would hope,
every one will acknowledge the *Light of*
Grace, or *Redemption*, which is only in and
by JESUS CHRIST, and is the *Light* of his
Holy Spirit, who is God and Man, only
to be that *true Light* ; and then, according
to the Apostle, every Man that cometh
into the World is lightened therewith.

I now come to that noted Saying of the
Apostle Paul to Titus, *For the Grace of*
God that bringeth Salvation, hath appeared
to all Men ; teaching us, that denying Un-
godliness and worldly Lusts, we should live
soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present
World: From which three Things are ve-
ry observable ; *First*, That this Grace is
saving Grace ; because he saith, *it brings*
Salvation. *Secondly*, That all Men may
come to have Benefit by it ; because, he
saith, *it appears to all Men*. *Thirdly*, That
it was the Saints Teacher, both with re-
lation to what they were to avoid, and
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what they were to do. All this is so very plain from the Text, that one would even conclude, none would adventure to deny it; tho' it is too apparent, some Men are so bold, that rather than have their Opinions refuted, they will even deny the most plain Sense of any Scripture. As, for Instance, *John* saith, *He* (to wit, CHRIST) *was a Propitiation for our Sins; and not for ours only, but also for the Sins of the whole World.* Here they will not admit, that the Apostle, by the *whole World*, intended Mankind in general, but only the Elect; whom they also conclude to be but a *small Part* of Mankind: when the Apostle doth plainly distinguish the *Elect*, or *Believers*, from the whole World, in saying, *for our Sins, and not for ours only;* and then saith, *but also for the Sins of the whole World:* by which it is most clear, that Mankind in general is comprehended. Again, tho' at Times they will grant, that the Holy Scriptures are the best Expounder of the Holy Scriptures, yet here, tho' the Apostle uses the same Phrase, in the same Epistle, in distinguishing the *Believers* and the *World* in general, they will not allow one and the same Interpretation to both: For the Apostle saith, in the same Epistle, *We know we are of God, and the whole*

World lieth in Wickedness. Here they will not allow the Apostle intends, by the *whole World*, the *Elect*; and yet they have the same Reason.

Thus too many make the Scripture suit with their Opinions, instead of making their Opinions suit with Scripture.

Now this *Grace* is that *spiritual Guide*, which the People called *Quakers* are heard so frequently to exhort People to observe the Teachings of: And is it not well done? And may they not lawfully do it; since it was the Saints Teacher of old, and taught them to *deny Ungodliness and worldly Lusts*, and also to *live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present World?* (Mark, *in this present World*). And have not we, in this Age, need to be taught this Lesson? And if we have, were it not well if all pressed People to hearken and adhere to this Teacher in their own Hearts, as well as the *Quakers* do exhort? And tho' thus to preach and teach be by too many now-a-days counted *Enthusiasm*; yet if the *Christian World*, so called, were more taught by this Teacher, it would look more like to its *primitive State*.

The Apostle *Paul*, in *Rom. v. 18.* maketh a plain Parallel between the Extent of *Adam's Transgression*, and *Christ's* Obe-

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Obedience and Righteousness: So that if there be a Loss and Disadvantage come upon all Men, by *Adam's* Transgression, even so there is a Gain and Advantage come upon all Men, thro' the Righteousness of CHRIST; even such a Gain and Advantage as the Apostle terms the *Free Gift*, which is unto *Justification of Life*: So that, for my Part, if I were for absolute Reprobation, this very Text would make my very Heart ake; seeing it is a dreadful Thing, either to add to or diminish from the Holy Scriptures; for which see *Rev. xxii. 18, 19.*

Now the Apostle doth say, this *Free Gift* doth come upon all to *Justification of Life*; yet he saith not, that all are thereby justified: even as he said before, *That the Grace of God appeared unto all Men*, yet not that all Men were saved by it. Nay, none are saved by Grace, or justified by this Free Gift, but those that suffer it to renew and sanctify them, by receiving it into their Hearts; all others are only thereby put into the Capacity of Salvation; and the Reason thereof is, because they *reject and resist it*, as those did *Acts vii. 51.* It would of its own Nature produce saving Effects in all; but all do not yield to its Operation. Even as it is in the

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the Figure : Cast a Grain of Wheat into the Ground, and if there be no Impediment, it will naturally produce Fruit, and yield Increase ; but if it be not suffered to abide in the Ground, or otherwise hindered, it doth not bring forth Fruit ; and yet no wise Man will lay the Blame in the Wheat. And thus we shall find in the Day of Judgment, according to those Parables made by our LORD, that the Condemnation of the World will not be, because they wanted Saving Grace, this Free Gift, or Divine Light ; but because they loved the Pleasures of Sin, their evil Life, and Darkness, better. For to be sure, the holy, just, merciful, and good God, will make it appear, when he judges the World in Righteousness, that he has done all, in order to the Salvation of Mankind, that is consistent with so glorious a Being.

But if it be objected, He may do what he pleases, he being an absolute Sovereign LORD.

I answer, He may do what he pleases : But we are to understand, he will not be pleased to do any thing but what is agreeable to all his holy Attributes ; his absolute Power will not move him to act contrary to the rest.

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And here I shall take Notice what the *Westminster Confession* saith, *Chap. 1. and Sect. 1.* "That the Light of Nature, and
"the Works of Creation and Providence,
"do so far manifest the Goodness, Wis-
"dom, and Power of G O D, as to leave
"Man unexcusable; yet are they not suf-
"ficient to give the Knowledge of G O D,
"and of his Will, which is necessary to
"Salvation."

Now I deny that to be sufficient to leave unexcusable, which is not, if improved, sufficient to leave excusable; and to say otherwise, is contrary to all the Reason G O D has given us. I hereby plead not for the Sufficiency of the Light of Nature; for I do not believe it to be able, either to excuse or accuse, that is, sufficiently: But the Grace of G O D, and Light of C H R I S T, is able to do both, as we are found loving or hating it. So I desire all to be careful how they charge such unaccountable Things to G O D: First, in taking the slothful Servant's Part, in making G O D require that of Man, he gives them no Power to do; and then, to make G O D amends, goeth about to make it appear, he may, and that justly. Let such first resolve us, Whether G O D doth not look on Man as
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an accountable Creature, and whom he will call to an Account for the Deeds done in the Body, and accordingly as he hath well or ill done, reward or punish him? Which, if it be granted, that Man is an accountable Creature, and that he shall receive according to the Deeds done, whether it is not absolutely necessary that such a Creature, under such Circumstances, have Power given him, either to do what is required of him, or not to do it. But to clear the Matter further, How can any Creature be justly punished for not doing that it never had Power given it to do? Or what Reward can it deserve, when it was not in the Power of the Creature to do otherwise? For if Man be under an absolute eternal Decree, so that all his Ways was from Eternity decreed, and that G O D hath unchangeably decreed whatsoever comes to pass, Whether, pray, can any Actions done by Man be properly and originally called *Man's Actions*? Or are they not more properly and originally God's? And then, pray, where is there any such thing as Sin in the World, except we will say, that God is the Author thereof; which is blasphemous to think? So, upon the whole, if this Doctrine were true, it would turn both

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Virtue and Vice out of the World ; and consequently Rewards and Punishments ; not to say it overthrows the Belief of the General Judgment. Yet I shall leave it with the rest, to the serious Consideration of my Readers.

Thus having taken a short View of this Doctrine of absolute Reprobation, and the Nature and Tendency of it, I shall proceed to our next, 1 Cor. xii. 7. Here the Apostle doth declare, *That a Manifestation of the Spirit is given to every Man to profit withal* ; which is more than to every *Believer*, or every one of the *Elect*, and much more than to none but the *Elect* ; for every Man comprehends both *Believers* and *Unbelievers*. And thus we find it was given, according to our Saviour's Parable of the Sower and the Talents : The Sower (who was himself) sow'd his Seed upon all the four sorts of Ground, tho' but one of them brought forth Fruit to Maturity ; and the Fault is there assign'd to be in the Ground, not in the Seed : for there is no Difference made of the Seed, but that it was all one in the four sorts of Ground. So likewise of the Talents, the slothful Servant is charged with not improving his Talent ; and nothing alledged even by the slothful Servant, but that

that the Talent was the same with the others, as it doth clearly appear to be: For the LORD called it *his Money*, and *his own*; nay, the slothful Servant confessed it to be his; and therefore, it was given to him that had made his five ten.

I have elsewhere shewed, that the asserting of Saving Grace to be given to all, doth not conclude all to be therefore saved; and the Holy Scriptures doth abundantly make it out, as I have already instanced, and shall more fully do, under the next Head. So that it greatly concerns all to see that they improve their Talents; and that the Word of Grace grow in their Hearts, that they suffer nothing to choke it; and that they profit with the Manifestation of the Spirit given them; or else, notwithstanding, they may perish: So that our Saviour's Exhortation is very necessary, that *what I say unto you, I say unto all, Watch.*

Our last Instance is, *Rom. x. 6, 7, 8.* where the Apostle acquaints us, that *the Word of Faith is nigh, in the Mouth and Heart*: And therefore, as *Moses* exhorted the *Jews*, so doth *Paul* the *Romans*, and holds it out as an universal Principle to both *Jew* and *Greek*. And in *ver. 12.* he saith, *There is no Difference, but the same*

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Lord over all, is rich unto all that call upon him. So that, according to this Doctrine, he might well affirm, as he did in Chap. ii. *That the Judgment of God is righteous, who will render to every Man according to his Deeds.---To them, who by patient Continuance in Well-doing, seek for Glory, and Honour, and Immortality;---eternal Life: But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the Truth, but obey Unrighteousness;---Indignation and Wrath, Tribulation and Anguish, upon every Soul of Man that doth Evil; of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile. But Glory, Honour, and Peace, to every Man that worketh Good; to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile. For there is no Respect of Persons with God.* Thus we see how universally this great Minister holds out the Gospel. Here is nothing that savours of any Absolute Reprobation.

So I shall sum up and conclude this Head thus: That since it doth appear, that the *Life* in him, the Divine Word, is the *Light of Men*; and that every Man that cometh into the World is lightened with a true Light; that the Grace of God, which bringeth Salvation, hath appeared to all Men; that there is a Manifestation of the Spirit given to every Man to profit withal;

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that the free Gift, which is unto Justification of Life, is come upon all Men ; that the Word of Faith is nigh, in the Mouth and Heart ; I hope we may, without Error, hold for Doctrine, as we have hitherto done, that such is the infinite Love of God to Mankind in general, that thro' the Righteousness and Obedience of his only begotten Son, our LORD JESUS CHRIST, he doth commit to every Man a Measure of Saving Light and Grace, in order to their Salvation ; and in the Day of every one's Visitation doth call them to Repentance thereby ; notwithstanding the *Westminster Confession* saith the contrary, and concludes, that God has passed by, and eternally reprobated, a great Part of Mankind, without any Respect had to their Disobedience or Sin, but for the Glory of his Sovereign Power ; and yet concludes, GOD made Man in his own Image, and, notwithstanding, decrees him to Hell and Torment, without (as before) Respect had to his Disobedience or Sin.

Pray, *Friendly Readers*, consider this and see how it tends to the Glory of his Sovereign Power, which is accompanied with the Perfection of Wisdom, Goodness, Righteousness, Love, and Mercy.

C H A

C H A P. IV.

Of the POSSIBILITY of FALLING away from GRACE.

BUT *when the Righteous turneth away from his Righteousness, and committeth Iniquity, and doth according to all the Abominations that the wicked Man doth, Shall he live? All his Righteousness he hath done shall not be mentioned: In his Trespass that he hath trespassed, and in his Sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die, Ezek. xviii. 24. Every Branch in me that beareth not Fruit, he taketh away. If a Man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a Branch, and is withered, John xv. 2, 6. But I keep under my Body, and bring it into Subjection; lest that, by any Means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be cast away, 1 Cor. ix. 27. Moreover, Brethren, I would not have you ignorant, how that all our Fathers were under the Cloud, and all passed through the Sea; and were all baptized unto Moses in the Cloud, and in the Sea; and did all eat the same spiritual Meat; and did all drink the same spiritual Drink: (for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ.) But with many of them*

God was not well pleased: For they were
overthrown in the Wilderness. Now these
Things were our Examples, to the Intent
we should not lust after evil Things, as they
also lusted, 1 Cor. x. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. Well,
because of Unbelief they were broken off, and
thou standest by Faith. Be not high-minded,
but fear: For if God spared not the na-
tural Branches, take heed lest he also spare
not thee, Rom. xi. 20, 21. Take heed,
Brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil
Heart of Unbelief, in departing from the
living God. For it is impossible for those
who were once enlightened, and have tasted
of the heavenly Gift, and were made Par-
takers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted
the good Word of God, and the Powers of
the World to come, if they shall fall away,
to renew them again unto Repentance: see-
ing they crucify to themselves the Son of God
afresh, and put him to open Shame, Heb. iii.
12. vi. 4, 5, 6. Now the End of the Com-
mandment is Charity, out of a pure Heart,
and of a good Conscience, and of Faith
unfeigned: Which some having put away,
concerning Faith, have made Shipwreck,
1 Tim. i. 5, 6, 19. Now the Spirit
speaketh expressly, that in the latter Times
some shall depart from the Faith, giving heed
to seducing Spirits, and Doctrines of Devils,
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1 Tim. iv. 1. *For if, after they have escaped the Pollutions of the World, through the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again intangled therein, and overcome, the latter End is worse with them than the Beginning. But it is happened unto them, according to the true Proverb: The Dog is turned to his own Vomit again; and the Sow that was washed, to her wallowing in the Mire, 2 Pet. ii. 20, 22.*

R E M A R K S.

From Ezek. xviii. it is very clear to me, that a righteous Man may fall from his Righteousness, and turn to commit Wickedness, and therein die; as it is, that a wicked Man may turn from his Wickedness, and become a righteous Man: The one is as inferrable from the Chapter as the other, and both undoubtedly true. Neither is it less inferrable from our Saviour's Doctrine, *John xv.* that it is possible to be grafted in him, so as to become a Branch in that heavenly Vine; yet, thro' Unfruitfulness, may come to be broken off, and wither. Which Doctrine had Weight with the Apostle Paul, which made him keep under his Body, and bring it into Subjection, *lest that after he had preached to others, he himself should*

become a Castaway. Now I come to Matter of Fact, where this holy Apostle, to warn the Believers then, acquaints them, how many of the Fathers fell away, and were destroy'd; notwithstanding their high Attainments, as to *eat of that spiritual Meat, and drink of that spiritual Drink*; for he tells us, *they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them; which Rock was CHRIST.* And then pray, were not such as those, that thus partook of CHRIST, Partakers of Saving Grace? And yet fell away, and were destroy'd by swift Judgments. Therefore he cautions the *Corinthians*, that tho' they stood, *to take heed lest they fell.*

Moreover, the Apostle, in *Rom. xi.* doth, from the Rejection of the *Jews*, and their being broken off from the good *Olive-tree*, (which is CHRIST) and the *Gentiles* being grafted in, caution them to be careful, *lest they be broken off too*; telling them, their standing was *by Faith*; so that they ought not to be *high-minded, but fear*; seeing the *Jews*, if they continued not in Unbelief, should be grafted in again, which was the Cause of their being broken off; which (I should think) would induce any sober Man to believe, that a State of Grace may be fallen from,

and

and then Grace may be given to those that perish.

The Author to the *Hebrews* cautions the *Believers* to take heed, *lest there be in any of them an evil Heart of Unbelief, in departing from the living God*; and shews how impossible it is to restore such again, as were made Partakers of the Holy Ghost, and the Powers of the World to come; seeing *they crucify afresh to themselves the Son of God, and put him to open Shame.*

The Apostle to his beloved *Timothy*, is also very full touching this Particular, how that *some had made Shipwreck of Faith*; which plainly demonstrates their falling from Grace: For if they had not turned from Grace, they would not have made *Shipwreck of Faith*; and without Grace, I know not how a Man can have Faith, especially *Faith unfeigned*, and a good Conscience. Besides, he further informs us, *That the Spirit spake expressly, that in the latter Times some should depart from the Faith*; and if it had not been the true Faith, I cannot see any Evil in departing from it.

The Apostle *Peter* is very full herein also, how that with such it is according to the true Proverb, *The Dog is turned*
to

to his Vomit again; and the Sow that was washed to her wallowing in the Mire: for, having escaped the Pollutions which are in the World, through the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, (which cannot be without the Grace of God) yet they came again to be intangled therein; so that their latter End is become worse than their Beginning. So it to me is Matter of Weight, that, notwithstanding we may know ourselves in a State of Grace; yet we may, if we be not duly watchful, lose so happy a Condition. And Experience has shewed us too much of the Truth of this. Tho' I deny not but there may such a State in Grace be obtained, from which there cannot be a total Apostacy; yet it is evident, a good Condition may be departed from; and if so, the *Westminster Confession* is out in this Matter, which concludes all but the *Elect*, God was pleased to pass by, and to ordain to Dishonour and Wrath, giving Saving Grace to them only, and that none of them can fall away; which concludes, that Grace cannot be fallen from. So, upon the whole, if these four particular Doctrines be orthodox, and according to the Gospel, then is that Doctrine of absolute Reprobation heterodox, and contrary

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contrary to Gospel. And that these my Labours may have the desired Effect, if it be but upon one Soul, I shall think them well bestowed.

Having thus shewed, under these four Heads, how full the Holy Scriptures are against, and in direct Opposition to this Doctrine of an absolute Reprobation, or God's eternally decreeing a certain Number, not only of Men, but Angels, to Dishonour and Wrath; and that he hath not decreed any thing, because he foresaw it as future, or as that which would come to pass upon such Conditions: Yet that those who are resolved, right or wrong, to hold to it, may have as little as possible to object against me of Unfairness, I shall also briefly consider those Scripture Texts the Makers of this *Confession of Faith* bring for Proof of the same. I shall thus, in Order, both quote their Doctrine, and also the Scripture Texts, as they stand in their *Westminster Confession* Book: Which Scriptures, I suppose they would make People believe, this their Doctrine is conformable to, and builded upon. By the opening of which, I also hope my Readers may further see how wide these Scripture Texts are to their Purpose. So that except they have some

some better Foundation, this their tottering Fabrick will not stand long, having no Footing or Warrant from them ; for they are in Harmony of themselves, tho' such opposite Doctrine would endeavour to rent them, or have them divided ; even as the Harlot in 1 Kings iii. 16. who, having overlaid her own Child, would have had the living Child divided. But, blessed be God, who has, and will more and more open the Eyes of People, so that they will not be thus imposed upon, in Matters so nearly concerning them ; but will, like the *Bereans* of old, examine whether these Things be so or no.

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WESTMINSTER CONFESSION,

Chap. 3. § 1.

“ GOD, from all Eternity, did, by the
 “ most wise and holy Counsel of his own
 “ Will, freely and unchangeably ordain
 “ whatsoever comes to pass, *Eph. i. 11.*
 “ *Rom. xi. 33. Heb. vi. 17. Rom. ix.*
 “ *15, 17.*”

Their first Proof, *Eph. i. 11.* ↓

In whom also we have obtain'd an Inheritance, being predestinated according to the Purpose of him who worketh all Things after the Counsel of his own Will.

R E M A R K S.

That *God worketh all Things after the Counsel of his own Will*, is most certain: For who shall be his Teacher? But how doth this prove, (which is the chief Part of the Text to the Matter in hand) *That God did from all Eternity ordain whatsoever comes to pass?* They must have brighter Eyes than I that can see that; for I am satisfied the Proof is not in these Texts: But all the Text says, is, *God worketh all Things, &c.* which relates to the present Time, and nothing to any former Decree, and which all Christians acknowledge, *That God worketh all his own Works,*

Works, or Things, after his own Counsel. Now, as to the Phrase, *all Things*, we must only understand the Apostle intends, *God worketh all his own Works, or Things*, and not, *whatsoever comes to pass*: This is most absurd, and would make God Author of all Wickedness. And the Apostle uses the same Phrase in the foregoing Verse, *That he might gather together in one all Things in Christ*. I hope these Faith-makers will not conclude, that this is meant universally; for then Reprobates must be gathered into CHRIST, as well as the Elect. And thus it doth appear that this Text doth no-way make for their Doctrine, neither with respect to an eternal Decree, nor to whatsoever comes to pass.

Their second Proof, *Rom. xi. 33.*

O the Depth of the Riches, both of the Wisdom and Knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his Judgments, and his Ways past finding out!

R E M A R K S.

This Text is a holy Admiration of the Wisdom and Knowledge of GOD; and doth very well prove the Infiniteness thereof: but doth no-way prove *he has, from all Eternity, decreed whatsoever comes to pass.*

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Their third and fourth Proofs, *Rom. ix.*
15, 17.

For he saith to Moses, I will have Mercy on whom I will have Mercy, and I will have Compassion on whom I will have Compassion : Therefore hath he Mercy on whom he will have Mercy, and whom he will he hardneth.

R E M A R K S.

These two Texts chiefly declare the Power of the Will of the Almighty God. Now, since it is the Power of the Will of an holy, good, and merciful God, we need not fear any Severity, but what is bounded with perfect Goodness. As concerning the Mercifulness of God, it is no ways contrary, but very agreeable to what is contained under these four Heads of Doctrine I have brought in opposition to this Doctrine of absolute Reprobation. And as concerning the *other Part* of the Text, *Whom he will he hardeneth* ; it does not say, whom he did from all Eternity harden, or decreed to harden ; this had been something : But, as the Apostle delivers it, it rather shews his *Power* than *Act*, being only, *Whom he will he hardeneth* ; yet to be rightly understood, we deny not GOD's *hardening*, in a right Scripture Sense, even as it relates to the Time of Mens great Provocation, and

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having rejected the Offers of Mercy, and
sinned out the Day of their Visitation :
as it was in *Jerusalem's* Case, where our
LORD with Tears expresses, *how often*
she might have been gathered ; and to make
it carry the Sense of his Meaning, gives
it under the Comparison of a *Hen gather-*
ing her Chickens ; which makes it appear
to be a real Design, and no feigned Shew :
But she rejecting such tender and real Offers
of Mercy, till her Day expired, our LORD
also tells us, that then *the Things that be-*
longed to her Peace was bid from her, but
not before : And as it is also in the Pa-
rable of the *Supper*, how that several, ha-
ving refused the Invitation, were afterwards
rejected. So God *hardeneth* none, as far
as we find by the Holy Scriptures, till af-
ter they have refused the Offers of Love
and Mercy. And thus is verified that
Scripture, *Man's Destruction is of himself,*
but his Help is in the Lord. But if God
had from all Eternity decreed it, and that
without respect to any thing future, or to
come, How can *Man's Destruction be,*
properly, *of himself* ? Pray consider this,
you that are for this Doctrine, and make
it demonstrable, how this Scripture can be
true, and your Doctrine too. The Man-
ner of GOD's hardening, therefore, is
a withdrawing of his Mercy, having
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been rejected ; and not an infusing Hard-
ness into Mens Hearts. Thus we see
what Proofs these Men bring for their
Doctrine. Surely they thought, if they
quoted but Scripture, it would serve, how
impertinent soever to their Purpose.

WESTMINSTER CONFESSION,
Chap. 3. § 2.

“ Yet hath he not decreed any thing,
“ because he foresaw it as future, or as
“ that which would come to pass upon
“ such Conditions, *Rom. ix. 11. 13, 16, 18.*

Their Proof, *Rom. ix. 11, &c.*

*For the Children being yet not born, nei-
ther having done any Good or Evil, that
the Purpose of God, according to Election,
might stand, not of Works, but of him that
calleteth: As it is written, Jacob have I
loved, but Esau have I hated.*

R E M A R K S.

Throughout this 9th of the *Romans*,
yea to the 12th Chapter, the Apostle
laboureth to beat down the carnal Con-
ceit of the *Jews* ; that because they were
the Seed of *Abraham*, according to the
Flesh, therefore they were the *Children of*
GOD : But he shews their Mistake, and
openeth the Mystery of the Gospel, how
that *all the Promises relate to CHRIST*,

and Faith in him ; as he elsewhere observes, *If ye be CHRIST's, then are ye Abraham's Seed, and Heirs according to the Promise.* Now here he brings, for Example, that of *Jacob* and *Esau*. But first, we must observe what that was, that was said, *before the Children were born* ; not that *God* loved *Jacob*, and hated *Esau* ; that was not spoken till long after they were both dead, and is there only, by the Apostle, quoted out of *Mal. i. 2, 3.* But that which was said before they were born, was, *The elder shall serve the younger* ; which was rather propheticall, than any Decree, and was fulfilled in *David's* Time, when the *Edomites* became *Tributaries* ; as also it is allegorical, representing the *two* inward *Seeds* and *Births* : At most, take it which Way you will, it is only a Preference of *Jacob* before *Esau*, which implies no Reprobation of *Esau* ; for many Men, having several Children, may love or prefer one above the rest, yet love them all well : And as our Saviour had several Disciples, yet he did in some Measure shew more Respect to *John*, than he did to the rest ; wherefore he was accounted the beloved Disciple, not but that he loved them all. Neither doth the Word *hated*, always signify an absolute and final Hatred : For *God* hates

hates the Wicked ; yet many wicked Men comes to find Mercy. And it is said in Scripture, *Jacob loved Rachel, and hated Leah* ; by which we are to understand, a Preference of *Rachel* above *Leah* ; for it is not to be granted, that *Jacob* hated his own Wife, in the common Sense of the Word : Yet such Instances are these Mens Proofs for their Doctrine of absolute Reprobation. As to the other Verses, enough is said above.

WESTMINSTER CONFESSION,
Chap. 3. § 3.

“ By the Decree of God, for the Manifestation of his Glory, some Men and Angels, 1 *Tim.* v. 21. *Mat.* xxv. 41. are predestinated unto everlasting Life ; and others foreordained to everlasting Death, *Rom.* ix. 22, 23. *Eph.* i. 5, 6. *Prov.* xvi. 4.”

R E M A R K S.

As touching these *Scriptures*, which relate to *Election*, it being a Doctrine noways opposed by me ; (*Election* being a *Selection*, or a *Preference* of some before others ; which doth not in the least imply the *Reprobation* of any :) Therefore I have no Cause to have any Controversy therewith. But whereas some *Angels*, as well as

Men, are by the *Confession* concluded to be fore-ordained to Everlasting Death ; I may take the Liberty to enquire, What Ground from Scripture they have for this Doctrine ? And all the Proof I find that they bring, touching the *Angels* being fore-ordained to Everlasting Death, is but One, and that is from *Mat. xxv. 41*. *Then shall he say to them also on the left Hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into Everlasting Fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels.* One might have thought, since they have brought but one Text, it would have been to the Purpose : But I must say, I can find no Fore-ordination at all in the Text ; for all that is said is, That *Everlasting Fire is prepared for the Devil and his Angels* ; which is no more than what is generally believ'd : For the infinite, wise, just, and good *GOD* has, no doubt, prepared *Punishment* for all wicked *Angels*, as well as *Men* ; as well as he has prepared *Joy* and *Felicity* for all the holy of both sorts. Now all this is but agreeable with the Acts of his divine Wisdom and Fore-knowledge ; and no Fore-ordination, or ordering, any Part of the Workmanship of his Hands, either *Angels* or *Men*, to everlasting Death, without Regard had to any thing future, or to come, as to be done by them, as the Occasion

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sion thereof. So I shall return to consider their other Proofs, relating to *Men*.

Rom. ix. 22. *What if God, willing to shew his Wrath, and to make his Power known, endureth with much Long-suffering the Vessels of Wrath, fitted to Destruction?*

This Text chiefly teacheth, that it may be consistent with the divine Wisdom, to bear, thro' his great Long-suffering, the *Vessels of Wrath*, (which are those that have out-lived the Day of their Visitation, as I have in Part shewed) to fill up their Measure of Wickedness, that he may more remarkably bring his Judgments upon them. And is not this the great Wisdom of GOD, that so others may be warned, and repent before the Day of their Visitation expire, and so they become fitted to Destruction? For then they may be truly said to be *fitted to Destruction*, and not before. And, pray, what more doth this Text hold out, which is far short to prove, that they were by GOD fore-ordained to everlasting Death. For my Part, I can find no such Meaning in the Text. *Pharoah* was, no doubt, one of those who had out-lived the Day of Mercy, when the LORD said, *For this Purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my Power in thee*: For these Words were not spoken till the Time of his great Pro-

Provocation ; having before that several Times refused to let the *Children of Israel* go ; so that the Case of *Pharaoh* doth not make any thing for this Doctrine of absolute Reprobation : For it is no where in the *Bible* said, that *GOD* did, from all Eternity, fore-ordain him to be a *Vessel of Wrath*, or Words that will carry that Construction. And for that Saying of the Apostle, *Hath not the Potter Power over the Clay, of the same Lump to make one Vessel unto Honour, and another unto Dishonour?* This Comparison sheweth the Power of *GOD* over Men, even as the Potter has Power over the Clay ; which no way holds out any absolute eternal Decree. And what Potter will make that a Vessel unto Dishonour, that will be one to Honour ? But if the Clay will not frame under his Hand, to be a Vessel of Honour, he then may make it to Dishonour. And what Ground have we to suppose otherwise of *GOD*, seeing we find, according to the Holy Scriptures, that it is not the Way of his Holy Spirit generally, to work irresistibly ? For there were those, *who resisted the Holy Ghost, as their Fathers also did* ; so not only they, but their Fathers also, *resisted* it. And *GOD* saith of the Old World, That his Spirit should not always strive with Man ; which also holds out the same

same Truth. And also there were such
as *crucified afresh to themselves the Son of
God, and did Despite to the Spirit of Grace*:
All which verifies the Truth of this Affir-
tion. Thus I have taken Notice, not on-
ly of their Proofs out of this 9th of *Ro-
mans*, but the Chapter itself, which may
any ways be thought to favour their Doc-
trine, and can find no such Inference war-
rantably to be drawn from it. As to their
Proof out of *Proverbs xvi. 4. The Lord
bath made all Things for himself; yea, even
the Wicked for the Day of Evil*: I suppose
no more can be justly drawn from this
Text, than that the LORD will bound all
Things to his own Glory; and that there-
fore the Wicked are to be punished: For
I think there is no great Difference be-
tween the Wicked being appointed for
the Day of Evil, and the Day of Evil
being appointed for them; which doth no
ways prove, that GOD did from all Eter-
nity fore-ordain any to be wicked, or that
any was fore-ordained to everlasting Death,
without any Regard had to their Wicked-
ness: For if GOD did not decree any
thing, because he foresaw it, or as what
would come to pass upon such Conditions;
then what less doth this Doctrine teach,
than that GOD did fore-ordain some to
everlasting Death, without Regard had to
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their Wickedness? So that it is no Wonder, that such Doctrine as this should have no better Proof from the Holy Scriptures.

WESTMINSTER CONFESSION,

Chap. 3. § 4.

“ These Angels and Men, thus Predestinated and Fore-ordained, are particularly and unchangeably designed; and
“ their Number is so certain and definite,
“ that it cannot be either increased or diminished, 2. *Tim.* ii. 19. *John* xiii. 18.---

R E M A R K S.

These Faith Makers have here, as it were, rivetted their Doctrine with bold Assertions; but it would have passed far better, with sober thinking *Christians*, if they had withal brought clear Scripture Proof; then it had been rivetted indeed: but since they have given us two Scripture Texts, we will hear what they say on their Behalf.

Nevertheless, the Foundation of God standeth sure, having this Seal, the LORD knoweth them that are his. And, Let everyone that nameth the Name of CHRIST, depart from Iniquity, 2. Tim. ii. 19. From this Text we may observe, First, That *The Foundation of God standeth sure.* Secondly, *The Lord knows them that are his.* Thirdly, *That they that name the Name of CHRIST, ought to depart from Iniquity.*

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That the *Foundation of GOD*, or the *Foundation* on which the true Church is built, *standeth sure*, is most certain: But what *Foundation* is that? Is it not *JESUS CHRIST*? Secondly, *That the LORD knoweth them that are his*; this is universally believed by all that believe in *GOD*; for they believe him to be omnipresent, omniscient, and omnipotent: But I hope this Foreknowledge is no Decree. However they have spared us the Pains in disputing that Point, because they say, *He did not decree any Thing, because he foresaw it as future*. Thirdly, *That they that name the Name of Christ, are to depart from Iniquity*; I suppose they will lay no Claim to, for to prove their Doctrine by. So how it is concludable from this Text, that the Number either of those that are saved, or perish, are so definite and certain, that one cannot be added or diminished to either Number, is more than I can apprehend, or they have proved.

Their other Proof is, *John xiii. 18. I speak not of you all; I know whom I have chosen*. ----- Is it not plain, that this Text chiefly shews the Divine Fore-knowledge of *CHRIST*, that the Disciples might know, that he fore-knew who would betray him, and doth relate to *Judas*? Which, what Shew of Proof this has, to prove the
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Number of them that are predestinated to Life, and of those that are fore-ordained to everlasting Death, to be so certain and definite, that one cannot be added or diminished to either Number, I leave to my Readers to observe.

Thus I have also examined the pretended Proofs they bring for the Confirmation of this their Doctrine of absolute Reprobation, and find they will not stand them instead: By which it may be observed, what great Difference there is between the Evidence the Holy Scriptures give, in behalf of any of those four particular Doctrines I have brought in opposition to this of absolute Reprobation; and the Evidence it giveth on the Behalf of this Doctrine; how copious and unanimous it is on the Behalf of any of the Four, and how short and defective on the Behalf of this of absolute Reprobation. And indeed how should it be otherwise? For it being in Harmony, it cannot give Evidence for them both; for that which is an Evidence for the one, is an Evidence against the other; so that if the one be true, the other is false. So I shall conclude these my small Endeavours, for the good of those that are, or may be herein concerned.

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